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State releases bridge Draft EIS

By KDN Staff

The State of Alaska rolled out the long anticipated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Gravina Access Project this week. The massive document details nine possible bridge options, including the state's preferred alternative — two high bridges linking Revillagigedo, Pennock and Gravina islands.

The first bridge, linking Revilla and Pennock, would be 3,715 feet long and 250 feet high with a minimum clearance of 200 feet. The second, between Pennock and Gravina, would be 2,750 feet long and 160 feet high with a minimum clearance of 120 feet. In addition to building two bridges, the state would construct eight miles of road, said Mark Dalton, project consultant with HDR Alaska — the lead consultant on the Gravina Access Project for the state Department of Transportation.

The \$244 million bridge alternative is the most expensive bridge option considered. It is expected to create a total of 470 direct construction jobs and 310 indirect jobs over the course of the project, according to the Draft EIS.

Finding funding for such a large project will likely be the biggest hurdle, said Dalton. "It's hard for me to see that it wouldn't be an issue," he said. The state has received about \$20 million for the project and spent about \$6 million, he said.

For more detail on this story, see Deanna Garrison's article in the Aug. 8, 2003, edition of the Ketchikan Daily News.